00745

1963/04/14

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

Bundy 6

36

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Control: 10524
Rec'd: APRIL 14, 1963
11:14 AM

Action
FE
Info
SS
SR
G
SP
L
H
SAL
EUR
NEA
IO
P
USIA
NSC
INR
CIA
NSA
OSD
ARMY
NAVY
AIR
NIC
RMR

FROM: VIENTIANE

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1454, APRIL 14, 10 PM

PRIORITY

ACTION DEPARTMENT 1454, INFORMATION BANGKOK 1131, CINCPAC 821, LONDON 679, NEW DELHI 311, PARIS 697, PHNOM PENH, SAIGON UNNUMBERED.

DEPT POUCH OTTAWA

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

TIME HONG KONG CORRESPONDENT JERRY SCHECTER, USUALLY RELIABLE, GAVE EMBOFF FOLLOWING RUN DOWN ON KONG LE 45 MINUTE INTERVIEW APRIL 13 WITH NINE NEWSMEN, INCLUDING TASS REP:

KONG LE SAID IF "SUPERIOR AUTHORITIES" COULD NOT NEGOTIATE PEACEFUL SOLUTION, HE WOULD FIGHT REGAIN LOST TERRITORY. SAID SOUVANNA TOLD HIM NOT USE FORCE AND WANTED PEACEFUL SOLUTION, BUT ENEMY USING FORCE. LONGER KONG LE WAITED, MORE TERRITORY HE LOST. SAID CO-CHAIRMEN MUST ORDER PL TROOPS RETURN TO FORMER POSITIONS. KONG LE SAID HE WANTED ICC PERMANENTLY STATIONED ANYWHERE IN AREA AS WITNESSES. HE ADDED HE HAD SUFFICIENT MIL STRENGTH TO ATTACK BUT DID NOT WANT TO SINCE MANY WOULD BE KILLED AND POPULATION SUFFER.

KL ADDED HE HAD NOT ASKED FOR REINFORCEMENTS FROM VIENTIANE AND DID NOT WANT PHOUMI COME IN. SAID PHOUMI TROOPS "AROUND US".

KL SAID NEUTRALISTS HAD CAPTURED 18 PRISONERS GOT AWAY WHEN KL RANKS BROKEN IN FIGHTING. SCHECTER SAID KHAMCHAN PRADITH

REPRODUCTION FROM THIS COPY IS PROHIBITED UNLESS "UNCLASSIFIED"

TOLD HIM AT AIRPORT MORNING APRIL 14 THAT NEUTRALISTS STILL HAD FOUR PRISONERS, MEANING VIET MINH, AND PLANNED SURFACE THEM. SCHECTER ALSO THINKS AVTAR SINGH AWARE NEUTRALISTS HAVE VM PRISONERS.

KONG LE SAID HE HAD NOTHING AGAINST SINGKAPO AND PL. INDICATED REAL PROBLEM WAS REBEL DEUANE AND VM. KL SAID HE WOULD NOT TAKE BACK DEUANE WHO HAD 4ØØ MEN. ADDED HIS CONDITION FOR SOLUTION AT PDJ WAS THAT PL TAKE DEUANE.

KL SAID VM LABORERS TURNED INTO SOLDIERS WERE FORMED INTO TWO COMPANIES AT KHANG KHAY AND, TWO COMPANIES AT XIENG KHOUANG, COMPOSED OF ARTILLERY SPECIALISTS, ETC. CHARGED UP TO 5ØØ VM EACH PL BATTALION. ALTOGETHER 15 PL BATTALIONS AT PDJ, PADONG, XIENG KHOUANG WITH 5ØØ-6ØØ MEN EACH.

KL STATED EVENING APRIL 12 AND MORNING APRIL 13 VM LAUNCHED TWO ATTACKS AGAINST 12 NEUTRALIST TANKS AT LAT HOUANG COMING FROM XIENG KHOUANG TO PDJ. VM USED BAZOOKAS, GRENADES, 85 MM HOWITZERS, 12Ø MM MORTARS. NEUTRALISTS LOST TWO TANKS, THREE DEAD, SIX WOUNDED. KONG LE SAID HE HAD ONLY 17 TANKS LEFT. HOWEVER, SCHECTER SAID COL. SABAP, WHO PRESENT AT TANK ENGAGEMENT, TOLD HIM KL FORCES HAD 4Ø TANKS LEFT.

KONG LE ESTIMATED 2ØØ CASUALITIES BOTH SIDES SINCE FIGHTING STARTED MARCH 3Ø. KL STATED NEUTRALISTS RETAINED VANG VIENG BUT CONFIRMED LOSS OF KASSY.

ASKED WHETHER 32 SOLDIERS ARRESTED AND SHOT LAST WEEK (PRESUMABLY REFERRING PL PROPAGANDA), KONG LE SAID HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THIS. SAID 26 ENEMY KILLED IN AMBUSH WHEN KL SENT REINFORCEMENTS TO XIENG KHOUANG LAST WEEK. SAID HE HAD ALSO LOST THREE 85 MM GUNS AND TWO 12Ø MM MORTARS IN XIENG KHOUANG FIGHTING.

KONG LE COMPLAINED OF LACK MEDICINES AND FUEL. WANTED SOVIET AMBASSADOR OBTAIN RELEASE OF 6,ØØØ TONS GAS AND 6,ØØØ TONS

-3- 1454, APRIL 14, 1Ø PM, FROM VIENTIANE

DIESEL NOW BLOCKED IN HANOI.

SCHECTER SAID HEAD OF FMM DETACHMENT, CAPT. JANEAU, TOLD HIM ATTACKS ON NEUTRALISTS WERE VM TACTICS. JANEAU ADDED VM WANTED EXPAND IN LAOS.

SCP-EXEMPT.

UNGER

BAP

Note-Pouched DCT